

work and for choosing to make Citrus County his home. His smile brings hope and joy to the troubled. His prayers strengthen wearied hearts. His words of comfort console those in need.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in paying tribute to the Reverend Leroy Bellamy, a man who credits his good life to his commitment to God. May Citrus County be blessed with the Rev. Bellamy's divine presence and spiritual leadership for many more years to come.

CARRIE P. MEEK'S TRIBUTE TO
REV. DR. G. DAVID HORTON,
PASTOR, GREATER NEW BETHEL
BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. CARRIE P. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is truly a distinct honor and privilege to pay tribute to one of Miami-Dade County's great ecclesiastical leaders, the Rev. Dr. G. David Horton, on his 20th Year Anniversary as Pastor of Greater New Bethel Baptist Church. I want to echo the same sentiments of joy and gratitude that his congregation is lifting up to Almighty God to celebrate his milestone during this month of July, culminating on Sunday, August 1, 1999.

Rev. Dr. Horton truly represents the best and the noblest of God's Chosen Ones. As pastor, preacher and minister of the Gospel, he is remarkably leading his congregation in the ways of God and has tirelessly worked to enlighten our community on the agenda of spiritual wisdom and good government based on our God-given conscience and responsibility toward others.

It is indeed fitting for those of us who subscribe to the Judeo-Christian Faith to pause and reflect on the important role that Rev. Dr. Horton plays in the day-to-day affairs of his congregation. I want to acknowledge the tremendous work he is doing in constantly guiding not only the members of the Greater New Bethel Baptist Church, but also our community at large. He has truly exemplified the example of Christ as the Good Shepherd, and is wisely leading his flock of believers to the demands of Faith and to the works of Charity, sharing with them the words of God's wisdom and salvation emanating from the Gospel.

His consecration and vigilance over the spiritual growth and socio-moral well-being of his congregation have impacted the lives of countless people, propelling him into one of our state's charismatic preachers. Accordingly, my constituents in the 17th Congressional District's northern sector are the fortunate beneficiaries of Rev. Horton's teachings and ministry, especially in his advocacy to reach out both by way of word and example our unconditional love and commitment to the children, the elderly, the poor, the disenfranchised and the less fortunate among us. We have learned from him the centrality of God in our daily lives, conscious of the fact that the mandate of our Faith and the obligation of our citizenship must characterize our service to those who could least fend for themselves.

His countless awards aptly described him as a forceful, courageous and visionary leader not only of the religious community, but also our society at large, firmly compelled by the fact that the Greater New Bethel Baptist Church in Miami is indeed part of a larger network of institutions that serve as the voice and conscience of our community. Rev. Dr. Horton is fully living up to his vocation as a pastor par excellence. His standards for learning, caring and achieving, especially among the youth, have won for him the accolades of our community. Public and private agencies, along with countless organizations, have oftentimes cited him for his resolute consecration to the Truth of the Gospel, along with his uncompromising stance on justice and equal opportunity for all.

Moreover, his crusades in teaching our youth have become legendary. He has gained the utmost confidence of parents, teachers and countless others from diverse professions who see in him as a no-nonsense motivator. They are wont to entrust him with the future of their children and families, genuinely confident that they will learn from him the tenets of personal excellence, buoyed up by an uncompromising commitment to hard work and discipline.

Our community is deeply touched and comforted by his undaunted leadership, compassion and personal warmth. As head of one of the largest Baptist Churches in Florida, Rev. Dr. Horton preaches and lives by the adage that the grace of God's Providence and the quest for His Justice must buttress our common quest for personal integrity and professional achievement in the service of others. As a man of God and as an indomitable leader in our community, he has rightfully earned our deepest respect and genuine admiration.

This is the great legacy the Rev. Dr. G. David Horton is unselfishly sharing with us on the occasion of his 20th Pastoral Anniversary. I am privileged indeed to be blessed with his friendship and confidence. And I am deeply grateful that he continues to teach us to live by his noble ethic of always loving God and serving our fellow men.

IN PROTEST OF RECEPTION FOR CASTRO GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

HON. PETER DEUTSCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to protest tonight's reception honoring two officials of the Castro regime, which makes a statement to Cuban dictator Fidel Castro and the world that the United States considers a Communist dictator to be a good trading partner.

I am troubled by the fact that tonight two of Castro's officials will be hosted at a Capitol Hill event for the first time in 40 years. Maria de la Luz B'Hammel and Igor Montero Brito should not have been granted visas to visit the United States, and they should not be welcomed as spokespeople for the opening up of trade between the United States and Cuba.

It is important that we remain vigilant in bringing to light the continuing deplorable be-

havior of Castro and his regime. Castro uses food as a weapon, cutting off the rations of those who speak out against his destructive and oppressive policies. He has destroyed his own country, and trade with him will not only be an affront to American ideals of human rights and freedom, but will also be disastrous for our economy.

There are those who look upon trade with the Castro regime as a panacea for the problems of our agriculture industry. In reality, trade with Castro will actually open up our markets to cheap products made with cheap labor in Cuba. Castro's agricultural products will be inexpensive because they will be made by overworked and underpaid workers in a country with no labor rights. His products may harm the environment, as they will be produced by a government without a system of checks and balances over environmental policies. And they will be dumped on the U.S. market, because Castro has never possessed nor does he now possess the ability to cooperate meaningfully with other nations.

Trade with Cuba will eventually be possible, but never under this tyrannical regime. To suggest otherwise, as tonight's reception does, is to forget our commitment to the ideals of freedom and democracy—ideals that Castro does not and will never share.

FOLIC ACID PROMOTION AND BIRTH DEFECTS PREVENTION ACT OF 1999

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, today, I, along with my colleague Congresswoman JO ANN EMERSON, am introducing the Folic Acid Promotion and Birth Defects Prevention Act of 1999. This bipartisan bill, with 102 Democratic and Republican original cosponsors, is being introduced in the Senate by Senators ABRAHAM, KOHL and BOND.

The Folic Acid Promotion and Birth Defects Prevention Act of 1999 will provide for a national folic acid education program to prevent birth defects.

Each year an estimated 2,500 babies are born in the United States with serious birth defects of the brain and spine, called neural tube defects. These neural tube defects cause crippling lifelong physical disabilities and at times, even death.

However, up to 70% of neural tube birth defects could be prevented if women of child-bearing age consumed 400 micrograms of folic acid daily. That means women need to eat a healthy diet and take a daily multivitamin. It's that simple.

Women need to be taking folic acid before and during their first trimester of pregnancy because these neural tube defects occur very early in pregnancy, before most women know that they are pregnant and because roughly 50% of all pregnancies in the U.S. are unplanned.

The problem is that the majority of women are not aware of the benefits of folic acid. A 1997 March of Dimes national survey found